

**CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS  
SCHOOL COMMITTEE**

**January 26, 2004 REGULAR MEETING**

January 26, 2004

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Rossetti called a Regular Meeting of the School Committee to order in the aldermanic chambers at 7:00 p.m., with a moment of silence and a salute to the flag of the United States of America.

**II. ROLL CALL**

Present were Mayor Curtatone, Ms. Bauer, Alderman Provost, Ms. Cardoso, Ms. Taylor, Ms. Foster, Ms. Bastardi, Ms. Harris and Ms. Rossetti.

No one was absent.

**III. AWARDS AND CITATIONS**

There were no presentations made this evening.

**IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Minutes were approved as follows by voice vote:

January 5, 2004:

- Annual Organization of the School Committee Meeting

January 12, 2004:

- Regular Meeting

Ms. Bauer amended the minutes of the January 12, 2004 Regular Meeting (p. 3, under Roll Call) to note *Mr. Anthony C. Caliri, Human Resources Manager, represented the school administration during the regular school committee meeting of January 12, 2004.*

The amended minutes were approved by voice vote.

**V. STUDENT ADVISORY COUNCIL**

Student representative Maya Nitzberg reported on the following items this evening:

Last week, the students of Somerville High School were notified of the tragic death of student, Danny Nunes, a well-known and respected member of the community. Ms. Nitzberg reported the faculty did a substantial job helping those in need of comfort; counselors, adjustment counselors and teachers were available to provide support to the students.

Today, January 26<sup>th</sup> is the first day of the second semester. Mid term exams were given last week, all went well and students will be receiving their grades in the next couple of weeks.

Teens Against Dating Abuse (TADA): Presentations will be given in the next few weeks in Ms. Brewster's English classes. After reading "The House on Mango Street", a story involving

**V. STUDENT ADVISORY COUNCIL (cont.)**

characteristics of domestic abuse, the students will be presented with information and stories relating to the issue of dating abuse.

**VI. REPORT OF SUPERINTENDENT**

Dr. Argenziano reported on the following items:

1. The Superintendent informed the committee Wednesday evening's January 28<sup>th</sup> Executive Session meeting may have to be rescheduled, due to the present forecast of potentially one foot of snow. If school is canceled, so are the school committee meetings. Brief discussion took place regarding an alternate date for members to meet if the executive session meeting is canceled due to the snowstorm. Further planning will take place if necessary.
2. Dr. Argenziano thanked Dr. Jenkins and all of the buildings staff for a very successful School Fair, held last Saturday, January 24, 2004. There were 132 Kindergarten sign ups this year, which is two more than the previous year. Dr. Jenkins prepared today, and provided to school committee members this evening, a three year comparison of Kindergarten registration at the School Fair.
3. Provided to members House Bill, No. 2215, which is a moratorium on the granting of charters for charter schools in the Commonwealth. This bill was put out by Mr. O'Brien of Kingston. Dr. Argenziano mentioned, as members are aware, there are a number of bills concerning moratoriums, and this past Friday, Governor Romney has asked to remove all three moratoriums, one on a number of students, one on a number of schools and one on the funding.
4. Enclosed is a copy of the Massachusetts Insight Education Principals' Network Bulletin. Dr. Argenziano informed members that this is the group that has been working for sometime to re-institute the MCAS remediation funding that was reduced from \$50 million to \$10 million last year.
5. Enclosed for members information is a memorandum from Commissioner Driscoll regarding approval of Somerville School District Technology Plan data.
6. Provided to members is an email received from Sharon Staples, Lincoln Park Community School Guidance Counselor. The topic discussed concerned bilingual students who are either in or have come out of the TBE (SEIP) Program. Ms. Staples expressed a desire to have a program during the summer where the strong students academically who are a year or two older than the rest of their class here, would have an opportunity to catch up, to be placed more on grade level based on their age and ability. In her email, Ms. Staples suggested there may be some grants that could be applied for to fund such a program.  
  
In response to Ms. Taylor's request to inquire about possible grant funding for this type of program at the Lincoln Park Community School, Dr. Argenziano stated he would contact Ms. Candyce Dostert.
7. Provided to members is an updated draft of the Library Curriculum, Grades K-12, prepared by Mr. Joseph Mastrocola, Coordinator of Instructional Technology, and the library staff.

**VI. REPORT OF SUPERINTENDENT (cont.)**

8. Enclosed is the Somerville High School *Community Scholarship Offerings* booklet that provides parents and senior students with an early opportunity to begin applying for some of the community scholarships offered.
9. Dr. Argenziano informed the committee that the Somerville Teachers Association and the Secretaries Union have tentatively been asked to attend the next school committee meeting to sign with the Chairman of the School Committee, the two contracts that have been approved.
10. Enclosed is a support for *Bill to Provide Resident College Tuition to Immigrant Students*. The Superintendent explained if students want to attend a state college, they have to pay out-of-district tuition. Dr. Argenziano was the only Superintendent out of 300 that had signed on to support passage of this bill, but after working with other Superintendents for approximately eighteen months, all have signed on in order to get our young people, especially in the 21 communities who have 85% of the immigrant students, the opportunity to pay in-state tuition.
11. Reported that the application for the Head Football Coaching position closed on January 16, 2003. The screening of applicants began on January 20<sup>th</sup>. Twenty two applicants are being interviewed and at a future personnel committee meeting, members will have two or three finalists for interviewing.

**VII. REPORT OF SUBCOMMITTEES**

**A. *Ed. Programs and Instruction Subcommittee:* Ms. Bauer (Jan. 21)**

Subjects discussed:

- ✓ Continued discussion of Guidance Department Evaluation and Review

Ms. Bauer reported general discussion on the guidance services and the recommendations in the evaluation of the guidance department, including flex time, distribution of cases, restructuring, supervision, and budget. Mr. Anthony Ciccariello, SHS Vice Headmaster and Acting Supervisor of SHS Guidance Counselors, and Mr. Louis Piacentini, Director of Special Education will be invited to the next Ed. Programs and Instruction subcommittee meeting, which is February 11, 2004. Ms. Bauer mentioned due to some of the conversation having to do with staffing issues and the possible restructuring issue, the committee would like continued discussion to take place at a personnel subcommittee meeting.

- ✓ Approval of In-Service Courses

Approved motions from subcommittee:

- To approve the Educational Technology Course "Creating Connections: Curriculum, Technology and Learning
- To approve the summer String Camp

**VIII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

**A. Policy Manual**

Ms. Cardoso will provide the assignments for the policy manual to school committee members at next Monday's meeting, February 2, 2004.

**IX. NEW BUSINESS**

**A. SHS Summer School Graduates**

Mr. Thomas F. Galligani, SHS Headmaster, recommended that the following student, who has successfully completed summer school and has earned the required credits, be granted a SHS diploma. Approved by voice vote.

Justin Fucile

**B. House Bills 2215 and 3136**

MOTION: Ms. Taylor made a motion, seconded by Ms. Cardoso, to send communication to our legislative delegation urging their support of House Bill 2215, A Moratorium on Commonwealth Charter Schools and House Bill 3136, Senate 237, Resident College Tuition to Immigrant students. The motion was approved by voice vote.

FRIENDLY

AMENDMENT: Ms. Rossetti made a friendly amendment to have included in the communication that the legislators bring particular attention to the funding formula. Ms. Taylor accepted the friendly amendment.

**C. Charter School Tuition Students**

In response to Ms. Bastardi's question of Charter School students and whether or not they are actually Somerville residents, Dr. Argenziano informed her that this information was provided in the packet of information school committee members previously received. At the beginning of August, all members are provided with an enrollment spreadsheet listing every student with their name, family, and address. A total of 388 students attend the Prospect Hill Charter School and a small number of students attend the Benjamin Banneker Charter School.

**School Building Measurements**

Per Ms. Bastardi's request, Dr. Argenziano will provide a copy of the information regarding the square footage of each school building.

**D. House Bill 3136, Senate Bill 237**

Motion: Ms. Harris made a motion, seconded by Ms. Foster, that the Somerville School Committee writes a letter urging fellow school committees in the area as well, to support House Bill 3136, Senate Bill 237, Resident College Tuition to Immigrant students. The motion was approved by voice vote.

**IX. NEW BUSINESS (cont.)**

**E. Report of Finance Director / Board of Aldermen**

Ms. Provost brought to the attention of school committee members a report the Board of Aldermen received last Thursday, from the City's Chief Financial Officer, Mr. McGinn. Alderman Provost discussed the information reported, which is mid point of this fiscal year as to whether the City's revenues and expenditures are on target. A copy of the report will be provided to committee members.

**F. Powder House Community School**

Ms. Rossetti reported this past week the Powder House Community School was visited by members of city side and would like to know what was being done in the Powder House Community School building. She asked Dr. Argenziano to respond in order for the community to hear discussion on this item. Very lengthy conversation followed. Dr. Argenziano and Mayor Curtatone responded to questions and addressed the concerns of committee members.

Ms. Rossetti requested that Mayor Curtatone notify Dr. Argenziano ahead of time, if in the future, any people from the city side would be visiting any school, so that the Superintendent is aware of this and he could then notify the school committee and school staff.

**G. Somerville High School Graduation Ceremony**

In response to Ms. Rossetti's question regarding the cost of having high school graduation at Tufts University, Fletcher's Field, for the class of 2004, Dr. Argenziano informed her that the estimated cost is \$7,000. which includes maintenance, Tufts police, Sunday set-up for Monday and possible rain out Monday to Tuesday. In addition, we would be renting 3000 chairs for people to sit on, where the previous two years the bleachers were used. This year Tufts offered us parking, which would be individually paid for by the Parent. From the Parking Garage the parents and families can walk straight across into the field area. Ms. Rossetti will bring the issue of charging the Parents for parking up at the next Finance and Facilities Subcommittee meeting, as the Tufts University representative will be present.

**X. ITEMS FROM BOARD MEMBERS**

**Ms. Bauer**

1. Cummings School PTA meeting is Thursday, January 29<sup>th</sup> from 2:45 – 4:45 p.m. and the Science Fair exhibits will be on display during that day and also on Friday, January 30, 2004.
2. Scholarship Offerings: Mr. Gerald M. Knight, Coordinator, Athletics & Intramural Sports/Phys. Ed., has a number of scholarship checks that have not yet been collected. Ms. Bauer encouraged anyone who has received a sports or other scholarship to do whatever follow up is necessary to collect that money.
3. Last week Ms. Bauer and Ms. Taylor attended the Title I Parents Advisory Council meeting. Discussion included all aspects of the Somerville Schools and plans that are happening.

**X. ITEMS FROM BOARD MEMBERS (cont.)**

There is a new evaluation of the Parent Involvement Policy and a draft copy was provided to Ms. Bauer and Ms. Taylor with the invitation to attend the next meeting with Title I for discussion. Ms. Bauer encouraged comments from other members and also invited any member interested to attend the next meeting which is scheduled for February 3<sup>rd</sup>.

**Alderman Provost**

Questions Alderman Provost asked regarding some of the material presented this evening and in the weekly packet:

- Kindergarten Registration at the School Fair / 3 Year Comparison

Dr. Argenziano informed her Kindergarten registration begins at the School Fair and continues through Labor Day. This evening Dr. Jenkins, District Administrator for Student Services, provided members with a one page information sheet listing who registered this Saturday, along with a comparison for the previous two years. Dr. Argenziano also provides an enrollment spreadsheet, which is done every two weeks, and school committee members receive this information six to eight times per year. One will be included in the February 2<sup>nd</sup> weekly packet as part of the projected enrollment for the coming budget.

- Evaluation and Review of the Guidance Department

In response to Alderman Provost's question as to the status of the Guidance Department report, Dr. Argenziano informed her that Mr. O'Donnell has completed his work, provided the school department with a twenty-one page report, it has been presented to the school committee and all of the buildings. The school committee accepted the report the first week in January. At the end of this month, Mr. Snow will be meeting with the cross section of counselors, administrators and teachers for input on the implementation on some of the recommendations of the guidance department report, for further suggestions, additions or deletions. In March, Administration will be ready to give a recommendation on direction in relation to the report.

- Library Curriculum for Grades K-12

Alderman Provost referred to the final draft of the updated Library Curriculum for Grades K-12. Mr. Snow discussed some of the major curriculum goals accomplished, as explained in the updated Library Curriculum document, prepared by Mr. Joseph Mastrocola and the library staff. Discussion followed. Mr. Snow and members of the committee responded to the questions asked by Ms. Provost. Ms. Rossetti let Alderman Provost know if she would like further information she may contact Mr. Mastrocola or the library staff.

**Ms. Cardoso**

1. The Title I PAC meeting is Tuesday, March 3<sup>rd</sup> at 7:00 p.m. at the Winter Hill Community School.

**X. ITEMS FROM BOARD MEMBERS (cont.)**

**Ms. Taylor**

1. The Duhamel Education Initiative Breakfast will be held on February 7<sup>th</sup>, 8:30 – 11:00 a.m. at the First Congregational Church, 89 College Avenue.
2. Commended the students who participated in the Martin Luther King Day Celebration on Monday, January 19<sup>th</sup>. Ms. Taylor recognized the East Somerville Community School chorus and also Carolina Contreras, a SHS student who was one of the principal speakers. Ms. Taylor expressed she was very proud of the work she presented and honored that she was chosen to represent herself and our school system so well. Ms. Taylor informed the committee that the schools will also be having a Martin Luther King Day event. It will be held on Thursday, February 5<sup>th</sup> at the Elizabeth Peabody House.

**Ms. Foster**

1. The SHS Boys Basketball program is having a fundraiser on Saturday, February 7<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m. at On The Hill Tavern in Magoun Square. Admission is free and there will be food, music and various raffles, including a \$1000. Grand Prize Raffle and a \$5,000. Grand Prize Knockoff Raffle. To buy raffle tickets or for more information, please contact JV Coach, Mark Antonelli, (617)584-7321 or Mike Foster at (617)628-8429. The boys program is growing and expanding and Ms. Foster urged the public to offer their support.

**Ms. Bastardi**

1. The City of Somerville in conjunction with the Office of Housing & Community Development (OHCD) will be holding a public hearing on Wednesday, January 28<sup>th</sup>, to obtain input on the Community Development Block Grants and the Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy Area for East Somerville, along with other programs. The meeting is at the East Somerville Community School library at 7:00 p.m. Ms. Bastardi encouraged all who are interested to attend. For further information, call City Hall (617)625-6600, x2500.
2. Thanked the Human Rights Commission, Dr. Argenziano and Mayor Curtatone for a wonderful celebration in honor of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., held last week, January 19<sup>th</sup>. Ms. Bastardi especially recognized and expressed her admiration and utmost respect to Somerville High School junior Carolina Contreras for her wonderful speech.
3. Informed members she left an email at their places this evening that she received from a parent whose child attends the Unidos program and asked her colleagues to read this letter.
4. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Brian Higgins Trivia Night is scheduled for Thursday, March 11<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m. at Good Times Emporium. The proceeds help families with children with special needs and two scholarships will be given to SHS students studying special education.
5. Wished Ms. Cardoso a Happy Birthday.

**Ms. Harris**

1. Requested that the Finance and Facilities Subcommittee meeting scheduled for February 12, 2004 be rescheduled. Brief discussion followed regarding an alternate date. Everyone will be notified once the date is set.

**X. ITEMS FROM BOARD MEMBERS (cont.)**

2. Wished Ms. Cardoso a Happy Birthday.

**Mayor Curtatone**

1. Asked that the community check the local Cable stations, Ch. 15 and Ch. 16, which will outline information regarding the snow removal policy during the declared snow emergency given the inclement weather that is predicted. He informed the public he would be strictly enforcing this policy and there are satellite-parking areas, which are use of the school parking lots in the areas for residents to use. Mayor Curtatone also informed the community that notices in English and several languages were sent out and school administration is in the process of sending notices home with the children.

**XI. COMMUNICATIONS**

There were no items of communication this evening.

**XII. PERSONNEL**

Complete report submitted to members. – Received and placed on file.

School Committee members were notified and accepted the following personnel actions of January 26, 2004 as follows:

**A. Retirements**

1. Theresa Haley, 45 Loomis St., #112B, Malden, MA 02148 (Scale) effective January 15, 2004.
2. Nancy Magaldi Olivolo, 32 Stearns Ave., Medford, MA 02155 (Music Teacher @ WSNS/Brown) effective June 30, 2004.

**B. Resignations**

1. Kathryn Carleton, 221 Mohawk Drive, Tewksbury, MA 01876 (Elementary Teacher on LOA) effective December 10, 2003.
2. Tony Gulla, 98 Edith St., Everett, MA 02149 (Pool Manager @ Kennedy) effective December 18, 2003.
3. Jennifer Winters, 47 Newbury St., Somerville, MA 02144 (Paraprofessional @ SKIP) effective December 19, 2004.
4. Kelly Demers, 6 Jerome St., Somerville, MA 02143 (Elementary Teacher currently of LOA) effective January 14, 2004.

**C. Child Care Leave of Absence**

1. Victoria Beauregard, 63 Water St., Westborough, MA 01581 (Guidance Counselor @ WHCS) effective 12/12/03 to 6/30/04.



**XII. PERSONNEL (cont.)**

**D. Maternity Leave of Absence**

1. Holly Kane-Moloney, 15 Shoemaker Rd., Lynn, MA (SAC @ SHS) effective March 29, 2004 to June 30, 2004.
2. Alicia Kersten, 18 Cherry St., Somerville, MA 02144 (Social Studies Teacher @ SHS) from April 30, 2004 to June 30, 2004.

**E. Family Medical Leave Act**

1. Mary Jane Weinstein, 72 Freemont St., Lexington, MA 02423 (SPED Program Director @ Kennedy School) from December 5, 2003 to February 24, 2004.
2. Julie Davenport, 34 Lexington Ave., Somerville, MA 02144 (Senior Clerk @ SHS) from December 15, 2003 to February 2, 2004.

**F. Authorizations**

**SHS/Healey**

ELL Specialist  
Effective 1/20/04  
New Position

Gyslaine Nelson  
62 Clinton St.  
Cambridge, MA 02149  
Salary M+30, Step J = \$62,683  
Cert. # 324586 TBE, Math 5-12, Elem 1-6

**Special Education**

ELL Specialist (Spanish)  
Effective 1/7/04  
Vice: J. Freeman (resigned)

Maria Torardi  
31 Headland Way  
Medford, MA 02155  
Cert. # Pending  
Salary: B, Step A = \$32,238

Senior Clerk 1  
Effective 12/16/03  
Vice: M. Foley (trans)

Lisa Fernandes  
18 Benedict St.  
Somerville, MA 02145  
Salary: \$27,392

SPED Paraprofessional  
Effective 1/15/04  
Vice: M. Bastardi (LOA)

Rebecca Murray  
15 Thorpe St.  
Somerville, MA 02143  
Salary: \$13,299

**KENNEDY**

Assistant Pool Manager  
Effective 1/26/04  
Vice: T. Gulla (resigned)

Richard Danehy  
50 Glen Ave.  
Methuen, MA 01844  
Salary: \$36,050

**XII. PERSONNEL (cont.)**

**LPCS**

Kindergarten Paraprofessional  
Effective December 15, 2003  
Vice: C. Butler (resigned)

Sandra Oliveira  
34 Concord Ave.  
Somerville, MA 02143  
Salary: \$13,299

**XIII. MOMENT OF SILENCE**

A moment of silence was observed for the following two people:

1. Danny Nunes, 11<sup>th</sup> grade student, Somerville High School.
2. Katherine R. McDonnell, sister of Joanne Dunne, Somerville High School teacher.

**XIV. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:40 p.m., by voice vote.

Dr. Albert F. Argenziano  
Secretary